

Message Text

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ORIGIN AF-06

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 NASA-01 SSO-00 SS-15 OES-03 NSCE-00

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DRAFTED BY AF/E:RCBARBOUR/WBCOOTE:PCS

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NASA:MR. DOYLE

S/S-O: L. MATTESON

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY TANANARIVE NIACT IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 164819

E.O. 11652:GDS

TAGS: NASA, PFOR, MA, US

SUBJECT: CLOSURE OF NASA STATION

REFERENCES; TANA 1217; TANA 1220; TANA 1221

1. WE ARE PLEASED TO HEAR THAT ALL PERSONNEL SAFE AND THAT DEPARTURE PLANS HAVE BEGUN.

2. YOU SHOULD SUBMIT THE FOLLOWING NOTE TO THE FONOFF IN REPLY TO ITS NOTE OF JULY 11:

A. QUOTE (COMPLIMENTS)...AND HAS THE HONOR TO INFORM THE MALAGASY GOVERNMENT THAT THE U.S. GOVERNMENT HAS PERMANENTLY CEASED ALL OPERATIONS AT THE NASA TRACKING STATION AT IMERINTSIATOSIKA IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE DIRECTIVE OF THE MALAGASY GOVERNMENT.

B. THE EMBASSY NOTES THAT THE STATED BASIS FOR THE DECISION OF THE MALAGASY GOVERNMENT IS THE MALAGASY CLAIM THAT THE U.S. GOVERNMENT HAS NOT PAID BACK RENT DUE TO THE MALAGASY GOVERNMENT.

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GOVERNMENT FOR OPERATION OF THE STATION. THE U.S. GOVERN-

MENT DOES NOT ACCEPT THIS CLAIM. THE ORIGINAL AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE TWO GOVERNMENTS UNDER WHICH THE STATION WAS OPERATED, AND THE EXTENSIONS THERETO, CONTAIN NO REQUIREMENTS OR PROVISIONS FOR SPECIFIC PAYMENTS OF RENT TO THE

MALAGASY GOVERNMENT NOR HAVE THERE EVER BEEN ANY UNDERSTANDINGS BETWEEN THE TWO GOVERNMENTS OUTSIDE THE TERMS OF THE WRITTEN AGREEMENT CONCERNING RENT FOR THE STATION. IN THE DISCUSSIONS WHICH HAVE BEEN HELD ON THIS SUBJECT SINCE THE EXPIRATION OF THE MOST RECENT AGREEMENT IN DECEMBER 1973 THE U.S. GOVERNMENT HAS CONSISTENTLY MADE IT CLEAR THAT NASA COULD NOT MAKE ANY RETROACTIVE PAYMENTS. THE EMBASSY REGRETS THAT THE COMMENCEMENT OF A \$100,000 RENTAL PAYMENT FROM 1973 HAS BEEN DEEMED INSUFFICIENT BY THE MALAGASY GOVERNMENT AND THAT MUTUALLY-SATISFACTORY ARRANGEMENTS COULD NOT BE REACHED.

C. THE EMBASSY HAS BEEN INSTRUCTED STRONGLY TO PROTEST THE DESPATCH OF MALAGASY TROOPS TO SEAL OFF THE COMPOUND, SHUT OFF THE POWER AND REFUSE TO PERMIT NY STATION EMPLOYEES ACCESS TO THE BUILDINGS FOR ANY PURPOSE. SUCH ACTION IS NOT ONLY UNNECESSARY, SINCE NASA IS COMPLYING PROMPTLY AND FULLY WITH THE MALAGASY DIRECTIVE TO CLOSE THE STATION, BUT IT IS CONTRARY TO THE FRIENDLY RELATIONS BETWEEN OUR TWO COUNTRIES.

D. THE EMBASSY WISHES TO STRESS THE PARAMOUNT IMPORTANCE WHICH THE U.S. GOVERNMENT ATTACHES TO THE SECURITY OF ALL AMERICAN PERSONNEL IN MADAGASCAR AND THE SAFE, ORDERLY DEPARTURE OF NASA EMPLOYEES AND THEIR DEPENDENTS. THE EMBASSY IS CURRENTLY MAKING ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE PHASED DEPARTURE OF NASA PERSONNEL. MANY OF THEM HAVE PASSPORTS AND OTHER PERSONAL PAPERS AND BELONGINGS IN THEIR OFFICES. THE U.S. GOVERNMENT EXPECTS THE MALAGASY GOVERNMENT TO PERMIT THESE PEOPLE TO ENTER AND LEAVE THE STATION TO OBTAIN THEIR PERSONAL POSSESSIONS, INCLUDING IN SOME INSTANCES LOCAL TAX DOCUMENTS WHICH ARE NECESSARY TO FACILITATE THEIR DEPARTURE FROM THE COUNTRY.

E. ADDITIONALLY, ACCESS TO THE STATION'S ADMINISTRATIVE
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RECORDS ARE REQUIRED SO THAT MALAGASY EMPLOYEES MAY BE PAID THE WAGES DUE THEM.

F. THE U.S. GOVERNMENT REQUESTS THE COOPERATION OF THE MALAGASY GOVERNMENT IN THE REMOVAL OF THE U.S. PROPERTY IN THE STATION AND IN THE MAINTENANCE OF THE STATION'S COMMUNICATIONS LINKS WITH THE UNITED STATES SO THAT THE ORDERLY CLOSING OF THE STATION MAY BE EXPEDITED.

(COMPLIMENTARY CLOSE) UNQUOTE. ROBINSON

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